

Proposed New Council Study Issue

Number	DPW 06
Status	Pending
Calendar Year	2008
New or Previous	Previous
Title	Zero Waste Policy
Lead Department	Public Works
Element or SubElement	3.2 Solid Waste

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

Zero waste is a philosophy and a design principle that goes beyond recycling to take a far-reaching "systems approach" to the flow of resources and waste through society. It focuses on designing and managing products and processes to reduce the volume and toxicity of waste and materials produced and to conserve and recover all resources.

Key elements of zero waste include:

- knowing your waste and designing it out (by returning resources to nature or to the economic mainstream)
- adopting a zero waste goal and planning for it
- holding producers responsible
- ending subsidies for wasting
- building infrastructure beyond recycling
- creating jobs and sustainable communities

AB 939 (the California Integrated Waste Management Act), which became law in 1989, required local governments to plan and implement programs and policies designed to divert 50% of solid waste from disposal. Sunnyvale was the first city in the state to adopt its AB 939 plan and one of the first large cities to reach 50% diversion. The City now diverts 63% of its waste from the landfill using source reduction (e.g. home composting), City-provided source separation collection programs, private recycling collection services and separation of recyclables from the garbage received at the SMaRT Station.

Sixteen years after AB 939's passage, communities that have achieved the 50% level have begun to ask "What comes next—Is recycling enough?" Over the last decade, zero waste resolutions and policies have become increasingly considered and adopted internationally (communities in Australia and New Zealand), nationally (Seattle), as well as by the State of California and local jurisdictions (Del Norte County, Santa Cruz County, San Luis Obispo County, San Francisco, and Palo Alto). Other communities in California have adopted goals beyond 50 percent diversion, including Alameda County (75 percent) and the City of Los Angeles (75 percent). These developments, along with continuing interest in increasing the efficiency of City operations (by eliminating, rather than managing

waste), in growing our local economy, in decreasing reliance on City programs to handle "waste" and conserving natural resources leads to considering a goal of zero waste.

If approved by Council for study, the outcome of this study issue would be a document that more completely describes Zero Waste and how the Zero Waste philosophy relates to the City's current programs and policies, and provides Zero Waste policy options for Council consideration. The options presented would depend on the findings of the study, but examples of possible policy options include:

- Raising the City's "50% or more" diversion goal to a higher level
- Expanding the scope of the existing Environmental Procurement Policy
- Increasing waste reduction outreach to the residential, business and institutional communities
- Targeting specific waste types and/or customer groups for special attention
- More forceful advocacy on regional, state, and federal legislation and policies relevant to waste reduction, producer responsibility, recycling, reuse, etc.

Last year, Council agreed with a staff recommendation that this item be deferred due to workload issues.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

Goal 3.2B and related policies in the Solid Waste Sub-element would fall under the umbrella of a Zero Waste Policy.

Goal 3.2B--Reduce solid waste disposal to 50% or less of the amount generated in 1990 (as adjusted to reflect population and economic changes) in the most cost-effective manner

Policy 3.2B.1--Reduce generation of solid waste by providing source reduction programs and promoting source reduction behavior

Policy 3.2B.2--Maximize diversion of solid waste from disposal by use of demand management techniques, providing and promoting recycling programs and encouraging private sector recycling

Policy 3.2B.4--Increase demand for recycled materials by advocating local, state and federal legislation that will increase use of recycled content products

These policies call for the use of demand management, environmental procurement, source reduction, reuse and recycling tools to reduce solid waste disposal to 50% or less of the amount generated within the City. A Zero Waste Policy would set these tools inside an overarching policy framework that sets a philosophical goal of completely eliminating disposal of solid wastes.

3. Origin of issue

Council Member(s)

General Plan

City Staff X

Public

Board or Commission none

4. Multiple Year Project? No Planned Completion Year 2008

5. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?

Does Council need to approve a work plan? No
 Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? No
 If so, which?
 Is a Council Study Session anticipated? Yes
 What is the public participation process?
 A community meeting or meetings will be held to present and discuss the draft Study and receive comments and suggestions from the public.

6. Cost of Study

Operating Budget Program covering costs
 323, Solid Waste Management
 Project Budget covering costs
 Budget modification \$ amount needed for study
 none
 Explain below what the additional funding will be used for

7. Potential fiscal impact to implement recommendations in the Study approved by Council

Capital expenditure range \$501K or more
 Operating expenditure range \$501K or more
 New revenues/savings range \$51K - \$100K

Explain impact briefly

Significant operating and/or capital costs could result, depending on the findings of the proposed study and the City Council's response to its recommendations. Costs could relate to the development and construction of new waste reuse and recycling equipment or facilities and/or the implementation of new outreach/promotion/education programs and new recycling collection programs. To the extent additional materials were diverted from landfill, costs would be somewhat offset by reduced landfill disposal costs.

8. Staff Recommendation

Staff Recommendation For Study

If 'For Study' or 'Against Study', explain

Developing a Zero Waste policy would provide the City with a planning framework within which to respond to future state mandates or community desires that call for reducing the amount of solid waste generated in and disposed by the City.

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9. Estimated consultant hours for completion of the study issue

Managers	Role	Manager	Hours
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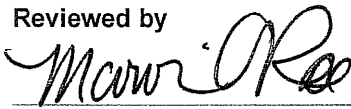
Lead	Bowers, Mark	Mgr CY1:	200	Mgr CY2:	0
		Staff CY1:	300	Staff CY2:	0
Interdep	Boco, Robert	Mgr CY1:	10	Mgr CY2:	0
		Staff CY1:	0	Staff CY2:	0

Total Hours CY1: 510

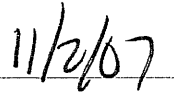
Total Hours CY2: 0

Note: If staff's recommendation is 'For Study' or 'Against Study', the Director should note the relative importance of this Study to other major projects that the Department is currently working on or that are soon to begin, and the impact on existing services/priorities.

Reviewed by

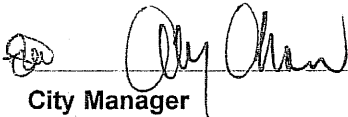


Department Director

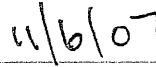


Date

Approved by



City Manager



Date